Fiftieth Anniversary

of

Leisy Orphan Aid Society

April 22, 1934.

Fiftieth Anniversary of Leisy Orphan Aid Society

Sunday afternoon, April 22, 1934, at 2 o'clock, the following anniversary program was given at the Halstead Mennonite church in Halstead in honor of the founding of the Leisy Orphan Aid Society 50 years ago:

Devotions—Rev. H. T. Unruh.
Special Music—West Zion Church.
History of the Organization—Rev. H. P. Krehbiel.
Special Music—Garden Township Church.
Accomplishments of the Leisy Orphan Aid Society—Rev. C. E. Krehbiel.
Reading—Elizabeth Hirschler.
Special Music—First Mennonite Church of Christian.
Sermon—A Challenge for Today—Rev. P. P. Wedel.
Special Music—Garden Township Church.
Remarks—By Old Friends.
Closing Prayer.
Song—West Zion Church.
Benediction — Rev. P. K. Regier.

Present Trustees of Leisy Orphan Aid Society

Rev. H. T. Unruh, Halstead, Kansas.
D. W. Galle, Moundridge, Kansas.
Ernest Bachman, Newton, Kansas.
John G. Stucky, Moundridge, Kansas.
C. F. Haury, Halstead, Kansas.
C. E. Krehbiel, Newton, Kansas, Superintendent.
J. A. Schowalter, Newton, Kansas, Overseer and Treasurer.

The Jacob Leisy Foundation
(Vermaechtnis)

Since the heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom has left my marriage childless, but has richly blessed me with temporal possessions, out of the resources entrusted to me by the Giver of all good gifts, I donate the sum of five thousand dollars ($5000.00) as an Orphan Fund with the provision that the interest from this Fund shall be used for the support, rearing and elementary education of poor orphan children up to their thirteenth year.

For the administration of this Orphan Fund I appoint for all time the Boards of Deacons of the Mennonite churches at Halstead, Harvey Co. and Christian, McPherson Co. Kansas, and in case there should in the course of time emanate a third church* out of the two named, then its Board of Deacons shall also constitute a part of the administrative body, which shall

*Note: At the annual meeting held March 30, 1894, the boards of deacons of the Garden Twp. and the West Zion Churches were made a part of the administrative body as here provided.

according to its best knowledge and ability invest said Fund, apply the interest for the purpose intended, and place the orphans with respectable Christian families for training, till it appears possible, necessary, or advisable to care for them in some other way, as for instance in an orphan home.

The purpose and aim of the training to be given poor orphan children up to their 13th year out of the interest from said Orphan Fund — the permanent capital of which, $5000.00, of course, is not to be touched or to be decreased by careless investments, — shall be, that the boys and girls thus brought up, shall not be in need of such support after their 13th year, but, being placed with respectable people, shall be in position to support themselves; therefore it is the express stipulation of this donation, that the demands for support from this Orphan Fund on the part of poor orphans who are able to work shall cease with their 13th year, and only in case of physical disability or weakness and hence incapacity to work shall the trustees be empowered to give aid for a time beyond the 13th year.

The permanent capital for this Orphan Fund will be at the disposal of the trustees immediately after the original of this donation has been signed by me and by the trustees, that is by the members of the boards of deacons of the churches named above; and upon the request of the latter I retain a consulting vote in the board of trustees so long as the Lord shall spare my life. After my death, however, the duplicate of this document now in my possession shall be given to the Western District Conference of the Mennonite churches in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Missouri and Kansas, to which Conference the trustees are annually to submit reports of their activities, receipts and expenditures.

Orphan children are obliged, during the time they receive aid from this Orphan Fund, to submit to guardianship supervision on the part of the trustees, that is, to arrangements made by them, including change of abode if that should be deemed necessary.

The sphere of activity of the trustees of this Orphan Fund shall be limited to what is understood by the term "Home Mission," and shall not be extended to include "Foreign Mission."

With the wish, the hope and the prayer that the Lord may bless this unpretentious undertaking and let it prosper to the glorification of His name and for the good of many orphan children I humbly attach my name.

(Signed) Jacob Leisy.

Done at Halstead, Kansas, October 30, 1883.

(Translated from German original by C. E. Krehbiel Feb. 11, 1929 and adopted by the Trustees Feb. 4, 1930.)

Agreeing to and accepting the regulations of the above donation we, the members of the boards of deacons of the churches at Halstead and Christian, Kansas, are personally signing our names here, thus binding ourselves to carry out the stipulations of said donation to the best of our knowledge and ability, and we confidently trust that all who may later succeed us in this capacity will do likewise.

Lord establish thou the work of our hands, yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

(Signed): Deacons of the Church at Halstead, Kansas: Christian Krehbiel; David Goerz; Johann Haury; J. W. Ruth; John Lehman.

Deacons of the Mennonite Church at Christian, McPherson Co. Kansas; Val. Krehbiel; Daniel Bachmann; Jacob Vogt; Wm. Galle; Johann Rupp; Daniel Krehbiel.

The undersigned who was named Treasurer by the Trustees of the Orphan Fund hereby acknowledges the receipt of the Orphan Fund capital of five thousand dollars ($5000.00) from the donor, Jacob Leisy.

(Signed) Christian Krehbiel, Halstead, Kansas, Nov. 1, 1883.

State of Kansas, SS
Harvey County.

Before me a Notary Public in and for said county this day personally came: Jacob Leisy, Christian Krehbiel, Johann Haury, J. W. Ruth, John Lehman, Val. Krehbiel, Daniel Bachmann, Jacob Vogt, Wm. Galle, Johann Rupp and Daniel Krehbiel who are personally known to be the same persons who subscribed to the foregoing Instrument of writing and duly acknowledged the execution of the same.

Given under my hand and seal this 30th day of October, 1883.

(Seal) Commission expires March 10, 1884.

(Signed) J. H. McNair, Notary Public.

A Brief Sketch
of the
Founder's Family, The Inception of the Society, and the Beginnings.
By H. P. Krehbiel, Newton, Kansas.

INTRODUCTORY.

The Leisy Orphan Aid Society is one of those benevolent enterprises which has been instrumental in doing much good, without any great ado being made about it, or without being conspicuous in the world. Having had its origin in noble Christian impulses and aims, the cause has been quietly and unostentatiously at work for now half a century. Many there are who have shared in its benefits—directly and indirectly, and there are many persons living today, who as orphans were helped and blessed by that goodly benefaction, and who now gratefully bless those who made the benefits thereof available for them.

THE FOUNDERS

The founders of the Leisy Orphan Aid Society were Jacob Leisy and Mary Strohm Leisy. It is fitting to this occasion to present here a brief biographical sketch of this godly man and woman.

Germany was the country of birth of both husband and wife. Jacob Leisy was born at Friedelsheim, Palatinate, in the year 1810. Here he grew to young manhood and received a meagre, though thorough elementary edu-

cation. He was of an adventurous disposition. As some Mennonites from South Germany had been emigrating to America in recent years, Leisy at about the age of 22,— that is about 1832 undertook a trip to the United States of America.

In those days transportation facilities were still meagre and primitive. As was common then, he too during his earlier sojourn, knapsack on his back, journeyed afoot through Ohio, then still but sparsely settled. The following anecdote was told by him. At one time he travelled thus for several days through a region settled by English speaking people, a language then unfamiliar to him. He finally grew lonely and became homesick. When thus oppressed, as he wandered along, he got to thinking of home, and began to feel like returning to Germany, when suddenly there came out of the distance sounds that gladdened his heart; it was the shrill call of geese on some farm. He stopped. How familiar, how homelike that sounds! "Das ist Deutsch; das verstehe ich; jetzt fuehle ich mich mehr daheim." (That is German, that I can understand, now I feel more at home.)

For seven years he remained in America. During that time he visited the principal Mennonite settlements, in Ohio, and perhaps also some in Indiana and Illinois. At the conclusion of the seven years he returned to his home in Germany. For a short time he remained at Friedelsheim. Then he joined a migratory movement to the state of Bavaria, where not very distant from the city of Munich, a settlement of Mennonite farmers was formed in the neighborhood known as Eichstock, so named after a large farm located near the top of a broad knoll and owned at that time by two brothers,—David Ruth and John Ruth. The former was the minister of the Eichstock Mennonite church. Though greatly reduced in numbers, the Mennonite settlement continues there. Meetings by Mennonites are still being conducted in the Eichstock church, situated at the very peak of the knoll.

Here Leisy found his lifemate in Mary Strohm, a sister of the wife of David Ruth. Here then they established their own farm home.

Not for very long was this residence destined to continue, for migration to America became very popular. By 1851 the Eichstock Mennonite settlement began to take wing. A general exodus set in. Bavaria was then and is still a backward country. When the Mennonites had come there a great forward move had set in. Excellent farmers as Mennonites have always been, the country soon blossomed under their care, and the old inhabitants rejoiced at having the Mennonites there. So, when, after only a dozen years' residence they left again, their departure caused great regret and proved to be a great shock to that whole neighborhood, from which it has not recovered to this day. This I learnt to be true from the present occupant of my maternal grandfather's home on the Eichstock farm. The lady there told me that it was a persistent tradition which she had from her parents that when the Mennonites left everything went back, and that up to this day that whole territory has not recovered from the shock of that departure.

It was in 1851 that the Bavarian people from the Eichstock and that neighborhood came to America. The larger number settled in Lee County, Iowa, where near Donnellson the descendants still continue as a flourishing Mennonite Church. It is there that the General Conference of the Mennonites had its beginning.

Leisy and wife went with the group that located in the state of Illinois, near the little village Summerfield. Here he bought a farm south of the village, and for a number of years did successful farming.

After the close of the civil war, that is 1867, they sold their farm, and made a trip to Germany. After a year or so they returned. A seventeen acre tract, lying within the city limits of Summerfield was bought. Here they built their home and settled down for the rest of their days.

About the year 1860 or soon after, a number of families moved from Iowa to Illinois. Among these were also the Ruth and Krehbiel families, related through Mrs. Leisy to the Leisy family. David Ruth located on a farm directly adjacent to Summerfield and next to the tract later bought by Leisy. So these brothers-in-law, after the separation for a while were now again near neighbors. Now the sisters, Katherine Ruth and Mary Leisy could by a short stroll easily visit each other, which they did very frequently. As David Ruth died after about a four years' residence there, the son-in-law, Christian Krehbiel, who had been chosen as minister of the Summerfield church, bought the farm and moved onto it in 1867. The mother-in-law, widow Ruth, retained several rooms in the house and continued to live there. Of course the sisters, Mrs. Leisy and widow Ruth continued their visits. Leisy was also a frequent visitor, particularly with the preacher Krehbiel. On such occasions many subjects of a wide range of interest were discussed. To these discussions the writer, though in the earlier period still very young, was frequently a highly interested listener. Thus it came that the writer listened to many such conversations that concerned themselves with the problems of bequests which were contemplated by the Leisys. They were childless. So the question what to do with their property was very frequently discussed, not seldom within the hearing of the writer. He also observed that a number of times his father went to the Leisy home to talk these matters over with both Mr. and Mrs. Leisy. For these contemplated bequests were of joint interest in which Mrs. Leisy shared very definitely and with much interest. For she was of a noble mind and highly spiritual. Having no children of her own, she wished to contribute something for the care of children that were parentless, in which object her husband heartily acquiesced.

INCEPTION OF PLAN FOR ORPHAN AID

It was this problem that was referred particularly to Christian Krehbiel, the wish being that he design a plan by which the aim sought might be realized. But the solution was not easy to find. It was in the early seventies that this subject began to be discussed. One of the conditions was that this aid should be confined to children of Mennonites. However, the Summerfield Mennonite Congregation was far removed from any other

Mennonite church, as it still is. To found an institution there for the care of Mennonite orphans was seen to be impracticable. Then too it was at this time that Mennonite immigration from Russia, Germany and Switzerland was just setting in. Attention was thereby diverted, and the hope of a new, large, closed Mennonite settlement arose. If that would be the case then some such undertaking as orderly orphan care might there be realized!

Very soon, under the leadership of Christian Krehbiel the selection of the four townships—Lakin, Halstead, Garden and Mound in Harvey and McPherson Counties, Kansas followed. This was a settlement of Summerfield, Illinois, and Donnellson, Iowa Mennonites. Within a year very many had bought and soon located there, and within a short time two Mennonite churches were organized, one at Halstead the other in Mound Township, the present Moundridge. The latter was given the name of Christian. About the same time a large influx of Mennonite immigrants from Europe established settlements in Kansas, chiefly in the proximity of Halstead. Leisy himself had bought two sections of land near Halstead. The newly established colonies flourished and soon began co-operative activity. In 1879 Christian Krehbiel with his family had removed from Summerfield to Halstead, Kansas, where he located on a nearby farm. He had been elected pastor of the Halstead Mennonite church. Largely through him the newly organized Mennonite Seminary was located at Halstead.

ORPHAN AID SOCIETY BEGUN

It was at this stage of development that Krehbiel, still in consultation with the Leisys, mapped out the plan of creating the Leisy Orphan Aid Society. He proposed that from a bequest by the Leisys for Orphan Support, a portion be used to purchase a quarter section of land, (having in view the particular land later actually bought) and the remainder to be set aside as a maintenance fund. The Leisy Orphan Aid Society was to be composed of the two churches Halstead and Christian. In passing it might here be remarked that through the division of the Christian church the West Zion and Garden Township churches came into being, and were included in the Leisy Orphan Aid Society.

The plan was adopted. Leisy bought the present "Orphan Farm" for $3000.00 Dollars. The deed is dated August 22, 1884, is signed by John Haury, the father of Daniel Haury of Halstead, still with us. The deed covers the North West Quarter of Section eleven, Lakin Township, Harvey County, Kansas. The farm is located one and one-half miles due south of Halstead. Christian Krehbiel, under whose wise counsel this bequest was made and the foundation created, was given charge of the handling of the benefaction.

CONCLUSION

Mrs. Leisy had passed away in the year 1879; five years later Mr. Leisy also followed. It was but a short time after the purchase of the Orphan Farm had been accomplished that Leisy passed to his reward.

The Leisys were generous givers. When the Mennonite School at

Wadsworth was young and in need of help to get started, and at that an innovation in Mennonite activities, the Leisys contributed $1000.00 for that school,—a large gift in those days for such a cause. Then, when Foreign Mission work was undertaken by the General Conference, the first undertaking of this kind by Mennonites in America, the Leisys gave to the support of this cause the liberal sum of 10,000.00 Dollars, which amount was later increased to 12,000.00 Dollars. It was this gift which proved to be of great material help in the earlier struggles of the Foreign Mission work.

But the most lasting bequest, rich in possibilities of immeasurable blessing to unfortunate parentless children is the foundation established by Jacob and Mary Leisy in the Leisy Orphan Aid Society. In it they continue to bless, and their works do follow them. Though they have departed this world, they continue in this bequest to seek to come to the rescue of helpless little ones, in response to Jesus' encouraging words, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

SUPPLEMENT

As a supplement to the above account, it may not be out of place to speak of the family connections of Jacob and Mary Leisy, which obtain in the communities constituting the Leisy Orphan Aid Society.

Three Nephews of Jacob Leisy were originally settled at Halstead. They were:

Jacob Schowalter. He had his home a few miles north of Halstead for many years. Later he removed to California, where he passed away several years ago.

Henry Schowalter. He passed away only a short time after arrival from Germany. Some of his children are with us. His sons Jacob and Fred. Schowalter continue to reside in this neighborhood. The former is actively connected with the management of the Leisy Orphan Aid Society, and is deeply interested in the same.

Abr. Schowalter. He and his wife have their home here in Halstead.

Leisy was a cousin of the Leisys in Cleveland, Ohio, and also of Henry Leisy of Wisner, Nebraska, and of Emil Leisy who for a long time lived near the Garden Township Mennonite church. He was also a cousin of the wife of Daniel Krehbiel, the latter the founder of the General Conference of Mennonites.

Mrs. Leisy was aunt to all the Ruths of Halstead also of the first wife of Daniel Haury, as also of the wife of Christian Krehbiel, the latter being for many years pastor of the Halstead church.

THE LEISY FOUNDATION AND SUBSIDIARIES, 1884-1934

Halstead, Kansas

By C. E. Krehbiel, Newton, Kansas

We were told that the income from the Leisy Foundation of $5000.00 was to be used to support orphan children within the confines of what is usually designated as "Home Mission."

You will have noticed that the Fund was to be permanent, and the income was to be used for orphans not over 13 years old. These were to be placed with Christian families till they might be cared for some other way—possibly in an orphan home.

These well-intentioned restrictions, in time, were found to be rather narrow. On October 30, 1883, the Foundation was signed at Halstead, Kansas, and on November 1, 1883, the Fund was paid as follows:

Peter Bartel, note and interest	$1033.50
D. Gaeddert, ditto	531.50
Chr. Schmutz, ditto	215.00
Val. Krehbiel, note	300.00
J. Linn, note	800.00
Check, Halstead bank	860.50
Three checks, St. Louis bank	1150.00
Cash	109.50
Total	$5000.00

Just 16 days later (Nov. 16, 1883) the NW¼ of Sec. 11, Twp. 27 was bought for $3000.00. Of this $2700 was paid down and on Washington's birthday (Feb. 22, 1884), after lawyer Ady had examined the title for $1.00, the remainder ($250) was paid. But for eight years the fund was allowed to accumulate, no aid being given orphans.

The land was rented to Philip Blough and the first year the rent returns amounted to $236.72. In 1886 a house and barn, etc. were put on the place amounting to $612.00. By Feb. 1889 the cash and securities—apart from the real estate—amounted to $2906.50; on Feb. 6, 1934—$7974.59.

As the first speaker stated, the management of the Foundation was placed with the Deacons of the Halstead and Christian Mennonite churches. For this purpose they incorporated under the laws of Kansas as "The Leisy Orphan Aid Society" on April 23, 1884, and operated under a charter and by-laws.

But at least three things worked together to expand the activities of the Foundation beyond the scope originally conceived: namely:

1. The discontinuing of the Indian Mission school at Halstead;

2. The desire of others to share in this benevolent service to unfortunate children; and

3. The need of homeless children who were not orphans.

1. The General Conference had conducted an Indian Mission School in Halstead in connection with the "Halstead Seminary," and when this was discontinued the Indian Industrial Mission school was established on the Chr. Krehbiel farm, and was continued for about ten years. This school received annual aid in the amount of $125 per child from the Federal Government and was under its inspection and made annual reports to it.

When later the charge was made that the Catholic church was exploiting this Federal aid to establish more schools, a movement was instituted to request all Protestant schools to accept no more such support

and discontinue their schools. Hence no more three-year contracts were made with Indians. — But a few of the half-breeds had lost father or mother and had no home to go to. They were therefore allowed to stay on the farm after the Indian school was discontinued.

About this time in a home in Halstead the mother was taken by death leaving three small girls. The father came and asked that two of the children be taken into the Krehbiel home. Arrangements were made and the first two girls, aged 5 and 3, came there on January 20, 1892.

The plan under consideration for some time was now being realized, namely, to make an orphan home on the Krehbiel farm. Rev. and Mrs. Krehbiel in 1893 visited and inspected various Homes in Cleveland and Chicago and from here brought a six year old girl with them.

2. But in order, on the one hand, to afford a wider circle opportunity to share in this Christian service to children, and, on the other, to extend the aid to homeless children who were not strictly orphans, another auxiliary organization—The Mennonite Orphan and Children Aid Society—was incorporated on October 4, 1893 with 35 individuals and churches in seven states as members, namely:

Jacob Galle, Moundridge, Kansas
Jacob Rupp, Moundridge, Kansas
D. T. Eymann, Moundridge, Kansas
Daniel Ruth, Moundridge, Kansas
Val. Krehbiel, Moundridge, Kansas
H. Dallke, Moundridge, Kansas
S. S. Baumgartner, Moundridge, Kansas
D. E. Schmitt, Moundridge, Kansas
Hermann Janzen, Elbing, Kansas
Chr. Krehbiel, Halstead, Kansas
J. E. Schmitt, Halstead, Kansas
D. Langenwalter, Halstead, Kansas
Daniel Haury, Halstead, Kansas
J. W. Krehbiel, Moundridge, Kansas
Gustav Harder, Brainerd, Kansas
Chr. Schowalter, Donnellson, Iowa
Peter Stauffer, Keams Canyon, Arizona
H. P. Krehbiel, Oberlin, Ohio
Mrs. A. Bixel, Bluffton, Ohio
Jacob Bergmann, Brainerd, Kansas
J. J. Suderman, Lehigh, Kansas
C. v. d. Smissen, Summerfield, Illinois
Gerhard Vogt, Summerfield, Illinois.
John Brand, Summerfield, Illinois
Jacob Funk, Hillsboro, Kansas
Jacob Augsburger, Carlock, Illinois
Jacobina Brennemann, Hopedale, Illinois
Elizabeth Funk, Hillsboro, Kansas

A. Sudermann, Newton, Kansas
S. S. Haury, Newton, Kansas
Jacob Vogt, Moundridge, Kansas
Mennonite Church, Summerfield, Illinois
Mennonite Church, Beatrice, Nebraska
Mennonite Church, Salem, Ohio
Sister Mission Society, Gretna, Manitoba

Members could be either Regular (voting) or Honorary participants. Annual contributions of $5.00 entitled to annual reports and a vote; $100 entitled to vote and life membership. A total of 426 membership certificates were issued, the last one, dated Dec. 28, 1908, going to the Mennonite church near Beatrice, Nebr.

(Because most of the original records were burnt in the big fire in Newton in 1914, it is not possible to give all details that might be worthy of preservation.)

Children were placed with families either under Contract till they were 18 or 21 years old, or less often by Adoption. This latter, of course, is the ideal. It eliminates any mercenary or selfish motive altogether; but entails greater responsibility as well as risks.

The study of the remnant of the old records is both interesting and pathetic—inspiring and depressing. Where there are small children, homes broken by death or otherwise always have an admixture of the tragic. Children cannot be as easily transplanted as trees can!

During the 14 years from Jan. 20, 1892, when the first white children were received, to May 9, 1906, when the last child entered into the Home, a total of 81 children were placed either in the Home or in families; most of them in Kansas, but some in Oklahoma and one in Illinois.

The children came from the Rescue Home, Kansas City; from the Illinois Children Home, Chicago; Children Home & Aid Society, 641 University Bldg., 79 Dearborn St., Chicago; and the American Home Finding Ass'n, 167 Dearborn St., Chicago, and a few from central Kansas.

Sixty-one came from Chicago. In 1894 23 children came to the Home. There were always 12 to 20 children in the Home. Some of them were never placed in any other family after coming to Krehbieltown. They attended public school and church in Halstead, and were also taught Bible and some German in the summer.

Two children from Chicago died in the Home: Lydia Ritter came there on June 15, 1894, became violently ill and died 6 days after on June 21. Leona Pleasant came the same year and remained in the Home till pneumonia took her in Jan. 14, 1900. These two were buried in the Halstead cemetery. —

A 15 day old boy baby, without a name, from Chicago was taken to a family at Pretty Prairie who wanted a baby boy. This child lived but a short time.

Robert Wiles, who was 13 when placed from Chicago with a family in Oklahoma, repeatedly ran away, and when 17 years old was killed in a

fight with a man with whom he was staying near Watonga, Okla.

Two of the boys who served in the war were in Veterans' Hospitals later.

It was customary, when families were contacted who wanted children, to send to the city institutions the wishes of applicants as to age, sex, etc. Family ties of children were respected as much as possible. But wishes could not always be met. Also, to economize on traveling expense often more children were brought than had been asked for. This at times took one by surprise.

Thus after a request for one child had been sent in, a telegram came, saying the matron was coming with children, some to be taken farther west, and asking that her train be met. At 6 a. m. on Feb. 10, 1894 the writer was at the depot. Imagine his surprise when being told as the train stopped, that he should take a two year old boy, his oldest sister of 8, and another of 4, while two other sisters were to be taken about 60 miles west!

The two-year old boy was given an apple and was content; but the girls realizing they were to be separated wept and resisted vigorously. I took up the boy and the younger girl, but she kicked and scratched and pulled my beard, and the other girl ran back and hugged her crying sisters. So it was necessary to ask Mr. McNair, who happened to be returning on the same train, to carry one of the children to the buggy. Little and big hearts were almost broken on such unforgetable occasions.....

When such children grow up, at times an almost irresistible, but very human and natural, desire to know where they came from, who their parents may be and whether and where and how they are living, etc., overwhelms them.

Thus a twin boy, after maturity, decided he wanted to know more about his own parents and inquired of me where he had come from. — The information sent with children usually—possibly purposely?—did not go beyond the Children Home from which they came. So the address of the Chicago Home was given him, and he wrote to it. But the letter came back with "Not at Address Given" or the like. He then addressed a letter to Mayor Harrison of Chicago, stating his case and asking for addresses of Children Homes in the City. Upon receipt of this information, he wrote to those he thought might know more; and one replied that the twins had likely come from a certain county in Illinois. — He now wrote the sheriff of that county his wish. But in the transfer of children, names are often grabled; and while he was under the impression that his parental name was "Force," he was informed that there was no such family in that county, but that the name "Fierce" was known and they likely were the people he was looking for.

The sheriff was much interested and very kind, and wrote that if the young man would come there, he would gladly take him out in his car to where they lived. He was informed that likely his parents were those who had been separated and were both married again. So he decided to go incognito and see them, which he did. . . . .

If time permitted, such incidents might be multiplied. They suffice to indicate the reason for "forgetting those things which are behind." But they also reveal a commendable human instinct of attachment to parents. And while they explain the reason for "Home-Finding" institutions; they also are the explanation for "Children-Finding" institutions that have sprung up, and that try to re-unite parents and children.

One thing that necessitated a change in the orphan work was a State law passed in 1901. — This law was justified as an anti orphan-dumping measure. But there is another side to it. On this the Children Committee reported to the annual meeting of the Society on April 2, 1902:

"In consequence of a law, passed by our State last spring, according to which a bond of $5000.00 is required for every orphan child that is brought into Kansas from another state, we could this year send only three children from Chicago direct to Oklahoma. Our efforts to get children from Kansas City, Kansas, have failed, although we had places for 5 to 8 children. But we still hope to get the desired children somewhere in Kansas. — Possibly our lawmakers will soon again enact a less barbarous law. May the Lord grant it. — With fraternal greetings, The Committee, Chr. Krehbiel, Ed Claassen, S. S. Haury."

No more children were brought into the State after this, and as children in the Home grew up or began to shift for themselves this work stopped and the charter of The Mennonite Orphan and Children Aid Society was allowed to lapse.

In a few instances relatives interfered; and in one or two cases lawyers inquired as to conditions under which children had been placed with certain families, but all in a friendly way, and there never was a suit instituted.

In the nature of things the great burden and responsibility of the Orphan Home—that labor of love—rested on the shoulders and hearts of the Superintendent—Father Krehbiel—and especially of the Matron—Mother Krehbiel, on whose birthday we today are celebrating this 50th anniversary.

It was no easy task for them—having reared 12 children of their own, and for 10 years having made their home a Mission school numbering at times as many as 35 Indian children—now, when approaching the 60th milestone of their lives, to give 10 more years to making the lot of 81 underprivileged children at least somewhat brighter. But they did it wholeheartedly; and while a few may have been unappreciative, the great majority bless them and treasure their memory.

While the last of the children was taken over by the Society in 1906, all were cared for and annual reports required till they were released. And the work was continued by giving aid to other needy orphans under the original Leisy Foundation.

A few years three Hopi Indian orphan children in Arizona received support; and for some time the Board of Home Missions of the General Conference received funds with which to become active along this line.

In the 20 years from 1914 to 1934, of which I have record, $8789.60 was expended in aiding orphans and this year (1934) already 31 orphans are

on the list for partial support. Most of these are among the Russian Mennonite refugees in Canada.—

One of the things I deeply regret is that it was not possible for me, when in relief work in Russia in 1922-23, to carry out my plan to bring with me 25 Mennonite orphan children for which purpose the Leisy Society, the Mennonite Charite, and friends had at my behest thru my brother, sent me $4200.00.

Thus this work with little children—such the Lord blessed—a work which was conceived in Christian love 50 years ago, by those who long since have passed to their reward, continues to alleviate distress and heal bleeding hearts as many letters in my possession testify.

While the laborers come and go, may the Spirit from on high abide, and guide and sanctify both those who are served and those who serve!

A CHALLENGE FOR TODAY

Text: 2. Thess. 3,13

By P. P. Wedel, Moundridge, Kansas

Dear friends, the subject I am to speak on today is not of my own choosing. It has been assigned to me. I have been requested to use as a topic for a brief discussion at this Jubilee service "A Challenge For Today."

As a text for challenging thot I have chosen 2. Thess. 2,13, where we read the words,

"But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing."

We are assembled after fifty years to bring praise to God for His guidance, protection and blessing thruout this half of a century and to challenge ourselves to be faithful to the trust God has placed in us. You have already heard about the history and the accomplishments of the Leisy Orphan Aid Society. Is it necessary to say more? Have they not been challenging enough? As we think of the fifty years of service of this Orphan Society and of our text three challenges come to our mind. The first challenge is

To be active in well-doing.

"But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing." The very need for works of benevolence is a challenge to do well. Fifty years ago brother Leisy saw a need. He knew that orphans needed to be reared and trained and provided for. That need became a challenge to him to do something to meet it. Perhaps that specific need locally is not as great today as it was at that time; for there are other organizations at work in this cause; but still there is a need. It is for our organization to meet this need today as much as it is possible to do so. But we are thinking not only of this need and we are thinking not only of our organization. About us there are many needs. Men are suffering for want temporally; men are suffering spiritual needs. We need to be conscious of this fact. We need to have open eyes to the needs round about us. We need to do something to meet

the crying needs of today.

A heart full of love to Jesus Christ and full of sympathy to our fellowmen will be a great help to urge us to action. I did not know brother Leisy personally. This Society is older than I am. So I cannot speak from personal observation. However, I believe that brother Leisy knew and loved the Lord. He was conscious of the great sacrifice that Christ brot on the cross for the salvation of the sinner. He was conscious also that God is the great Benefactor from whom the blessings of temporal wealth come. And then he must have had a sympathetic heart towards others, especially towards the suffering, and especially towards children who are deprived of the blessings of having their parents with them to care for them. That spurred him on to the act of benevolence without which we would hardly have this celebration today. If we have that same knowledge and love for Christ and sympathy for others, we too will be active in well-doing.

For it is possible to do well. Brother Leisy looked at the possessions the Lord had given him and he saw in them the possibility to do something for the Lord. Not all of us can make a donation of $5000 for some worthy cause. But all of us can give of our time and of our interest and of our prayers and of our money towards well-doing. There are acts of benevolence that we all can perform. This day is a challenge to us to do something for the glory of God and the temporal and spiritual welfare of fellowmen. It challenges us to be active in well-doing. The second challenge of today is

To guard against becoming weary.

"Be not weary in well-doing." Perhaps there have been times during the last fifty years that we were in danger of becoming weary in the work of The Leisy Orphan Aid Society. The work seemed so small. Our accomplishments have not been of the kind that attract wide attention and notoriety. Some of the work seemingly has not prospered; for some of the orphans entrusted to our care did not turn out as we would have had them be. Such experiences are a temptation to become weary.

But this day challenges us not to yield to such temptations. True it is, that our work will continue to remain rather small and unnoticed. But by the specifications of the gift we are obliged to confine ourselves to orphans. Even tho we feel that the need in this field is not so great today, because conditions in the fifty years have changed, still there is work that can and should be done.

But we want to use this celebration as a challenge not to become weary in well-doing in general. As we observe the greater field of benevolence and the many opportunities and needs, we are conscious that there are also many hindrances. The financial conditions of today are not encouraging. We experience much ingratitude when we carry on in the fields of benevolent work. Much criticism may be heaped upon us in our effort to serve. It will require effort, sacrifice, self-denial and hard labor. All of these things may be discouraging. But especially discouraging are the disappointments that we receive when some of those in whose behalf we are active in well-

doing do not respond to our efforts and when they fail to appreciate what we are doing for them. Yet all this must not discourage us. We dare not become weary. The challenge of today is to guard against becoming weary. But let us hear a third challenge that this day is bringing to us. The challenge of today is

To be conscious that our well-doing is not in vain.

Our text does not mention this. But Paul would not have challenged the Christians to well-doing had he not been conscious that it is not in vain that they do well.

Brother Leisy very likely looked into the future when he made his donation of $5000 for orphan work. Perhaps he never saw with his own eyes the blessings that came into the lives of orphans as benevolent people spurred on by his example and by the love of Jesus Christ took hold of the cause that he promoted. I do not know whether he had opportunity to see the fruits. But surely in his mind he rested assured that the donation would not be in vain. And today we know it was not. Many a child has come under the care of the Leisy Orphan Aid Society. The credit does not all belong to Brother Leisy, but also to those who carried on the work. But really all credit, honor and glory belongs to God. But those who carried on the work have been blessed in this work. As they read the reports of the children that they placed into the homes, as they met with some of these children they felt amply repaid for their efforts. How many a blessing came into the lives of the children who have been cared for. Some of them will ever be willing to call our society and the people behind it blessed, because of what it has meant for them.

But we are thinking in terms also of the blessing that some of these children are to others. We know that some of the children have prospered; some of them have become true children of God and today in their own families that they have organized or in various walks of life are living the Christian life. We hope that most of them have found Jesus Christ as their Savior and that they are a credit to the Christian homes in which they were placed and to the Society that placed them there. And we pray that they might continue to be true children of God and live to the glory of Jesus Christ. Truly the Leisy Orphan Aid Society has not labored in vain.

In this consciousness let us labor on. As an organization may we continue in the work entrusted to us. As individual Christians may we hear the challenge of today as we celebrate fifty years of Leisy Orphan Aid Society work. If the Lord so lead that in another fifty years a celebration of the existence and work of this society be held, may those who celebrate the one hundredth anniversary be able to say of us: They heard the challenge of their day. They were active in well doing. They did not become weary. They were conscious that their benevolence would not be in vain. They labored on and today we see the fruits of their labors; they were true to the admonition of the word of God, "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well-doing."

THROUGH FIFTY YEARS

(Dedicated to the memory of Uncle Leisy and to the Society which bears his name.)

While we have gathered here today
A tribute of respect to pay
To this great work by one begun, —
And fifty years now carried on,
By those whose lives inspired too
By his kind deeds, which they might do; —
We feel it was the Master's will
Who bids us labor for Him still.
This world's so full of pain and need,
And many hungry ones to feed.
The call rings out, so plain and clear:
Toil on, toil on, and do not fear.
Throughout this time, throughout these years
Most loving hands have dried the tears
Of children, without a mother,
Through the gift of this kind brother.
So oft it seemed there was no way
Yet help came with the dawn of day.
To many homes it brought good cheer
Where death left hearts, so sad and drear.
It proved itself a friend in need.
A loving thought, a kindly deed
Gave new courage to some mother,
Or rendered aid to an other.
And children, who were left alone,
Received a kind and welcome home.
Thus efforts have been richly blest
Through fifty years it stood the test.
And still a challenge of our day
Through which we hear the Master say:
"This work I leave for you to do,
That you my love to others shew.
The hungry ones must needs be fed
That to the Shepherd they be led.
Each loving deed done unto these
Will God, the Father, greatly please.
Discouragements may often be,
But carry on, abide in Me.
Your labors ne'er will prove in vain,
A rich reward will be your gain."

—M. M. H.